

OPENING ADDRESS BY DR. ORJI OGBONNAYA ORJI, THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY/CEO OF THE NIGERIA EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE- NEITI, AT THE 4TH NATIONAL EXTRACTIVE DIALOGUE (NED 2025) HOLDING AT IBOM HOTEL & RESORTS, UYO, AKWA IBOM STATE | JULY 30–31, 2025

THEME: “Transitions, Divestments, and Critical Minerals: Charting a Just Future for Nigeria’s Extractive Sector”

Protocols duly observed.

Distinguished participants, partners, stakeholders, and friends of NEITI.

It is with deep appreciation and renewed sense of responsibility that I welcome you to the 4th edition of the National Extractive Dialogue (NED 2025), hosted here in the vibrant city of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. This state, blessed with natural resources and known for its peace and hospitality, is a fitting location for this important national conversation.

Let me begin by expressing our gratitude to His Excellency, Pastor Dr. Umo Eno, Executive Governor of Akwa Ibom State and his team, for creating the enabling environment that made this Dialogue possible in one of Nigeria’s most prominent oil-producing regions.

To our co-organizers—the Federal Ministry of Solid Minerals Development, National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency-NOSDRA, Spaces for Change and our global partners at the Ford Foundation—we thank you all for your institutional cooperation, inter-agency collaboration, and unwavering commitment to extractive sector governance.

Setting the Context: A Defining Theme

This year's theme—"Transitions, Divestments, and Critical Minerals: Charting a Just Future for Nigeria's Extractive Sector"—is both timely and far-reaching. It is urgent, because Nigeria stands at a historic crossroads:

- The global shift to clean energy is accelerating;
- International oil companies are divesting from onshore and shallow-water assets;
- And the race for critical minerals—lithium, nickel, cobalt, copper—is reshaping global economic and geopolitical priorities.

It is also visionary, because it compels us to look beyond resource extraction and profit, towards a future anchored on justice, sustainability, inclusion and shared prosperity.

What NEITI Has Done: Anticipating the Transition.

To prepare Nigeria for this moment of transformation, NEITI has taken bold and strategic steps:

1. Research on Energy Transition and Economic Impact

NEITI has commissioned a comprehensive research study on the impact of energy transition on Nigeria's economy. This is part of our strategic response to the risks and opportunities emerging from the global shift to renewable energy.

The study aims to generate evidence-based insights to:

- Guide fiscal planning and policy reform;
- Safeguard livelihoods and national revenue;
- Protect host communities from exclusion;
- Align NEITI's work with Nigeria's Energy Transition Plan, NDCs, and the Climate Change Act.

2. Launch of the NEITI Data Center – Nigeria's Digital Transparency Backbone

In 2024, NEITI launched its flagship Data Center—a national infrastructure for real-time, automated, and centralized extractive sector data.

When fully operational, the Data Centre will:

- Centralize licensing, production, revenue, and export data across oil, gas, and solid minerals;
- Enable automated disclosures by companies in line with EITI Standards;
- Support integration and validation across government regulatory agencies.

In a data-driven world, the NEITI Data Center is our national commitment to intelligent, accessible, and actionable transparency.

Let me be clear:

There can be no justice without data. No reform without records. No future without facts.

3. NEITI's Energy Transition & Climate Accountability Framework

In May 2025, the NEITI Board adopted a ground-breaking Energy Transition & Climate Accountability Framework to guide NEITI's disclosures. The framework mandates:

- Oversight of IOC divestments and asset transfers;
- Mandatory tracking of GHG emissions and climate risk;
- Monitoring of Host Community Development Trusts (HCDTs);

- Alignment with Nigeria's energy transition plans;
- Biannual public climate performance reports.

Henceforth, NEITI will not publish any report without climate and emissions data. This is a new national standard, and one fit for a world in transition.

4. Solid Minerals Transparency – From Potential to Performance

Nigeria's mineral wealth is no longer speculative—it is quantifiable and rising:

- Gold royalties grew by 104.5% to ₦2.92 billion;
- Lithium royalties rose by 252.2% to ₦398.19 million;
- Tin royalties surged by 4,014.6% to ₦540.7 million.

We are tracking these numbers in real-time and linking them to community development, local value addition, and national beneficiation plans.

The Challenges Before Us: A Critical Moment

As we move forward, we must answer difficult but necessary questions:

- Will divestments leave behind environmental and social liabilities?
- Will critical minerals be rich in revenue, but poor in justice?
- Will host communities be empowered, or be excluded?

We must urgently define how to:

- Build local industrial capacity for mineral processing;
- Enforce community rights through effective HCDDT implementation;
- Establish legally binding environmental remediation frameworks with financial guarantees.

A Three-Pronged Agenda for a Just Future.

NEITI hereby proposes a strategic agenda built on three interconnected pillars:

1. Data for Governance

From reporting to decision-making. From static audits to real-time accountability. Our Data Center is the engine of this transformation.

2. Dialogue for Inclusion

Policy without people is incomplete. This Dialogue must elevate the voices of host communities, women, youth, and artisanal miners.

3. Delivery for Impact

This Dialogue must produce outcomes not just communiqués. These include:

- National protocols for divestment and decommissioning;
- Legal safeguards for community benefit and environmental responsibility;
- Incentives for local beneficiation and extractive-driven industrialization.

The Role of Stakeholders: Shared Responsibility

NEITI cannot do this alone. We call on:

- Federal and State Governments to embed NEITI data into national planning and budgeting;
- Regulators to act on audit findings and strengthen enforcement;
- Companies to go beyond compliance and lead on ESG;
- Civil Society to use NEITI data for constructive accountability;
- Development Partners to support capacity building, innovation, and technology for transparency.

Conclusion: The Choice is Ours

The decisions we make today will define Nigeria's extractive legacy for generations. We have a rare opportunity to chart a new path—where our natural resources fuel national development, uphold justice, and restore dignity to host communities.

Let us choose transformation over tradition, justice over expediency, and collaboration over complacency.

NEITI is ready. Our systems are live. Our data is credible. Our resolve is firm.

Let the dialogue begin now not tomorrow

Thank you and I wish us all courageous, evidence-driven, and action-oriented deliberations.